

The IPAT project is getting to the heart

On the 26th and 27th of April 2021, the partners of IPAT project - Integrative Parents' Autism Training – met online for a two-day meeting. The meeting, virtually hosted by Gaziantep University, was planned to happen in Turkey. Unfortunately, due to the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the partnership was not able to travel, and the face-to-face meeting was replaced by efficient online sessions.

The Turkish partners, on behalf of Gaziantep University, welcomed the Consortium with a virtual visit of the University that showed the vibrant life and the richness of the training that the University is able to offer.

The first day of the online transnational meeting covered two relevant issues in terms of implementation and communication of the IPAT project. The first session led by The Child and Adolescent's Center, coordinator of the project and of the first intellectual output, focused on reviewing the results of the focus groups and the literature review in each country and consolidating them in a joint report. The session was first opened by the presentation of results at local and national level. Very interestingly, despite the cultural and societal differences in the partner countries, the Consortium of the IPAT project found that recurrent and common themes and needs emerged from the research phase and in particular from the focus groups. The findings from the research phase will constitute the basis for the elaboration of the IPAT training module. The similarities and commonalities highlighted by project partners will be addressed by the training for parents of people with autism and will be beneficial for improving the quality of life of the participants. In conclusion of the session, the Child and Adolescent's Center presented the global report results so as to trigger an open discussion on the conclusion of the first intellectual output "*Needs Assessment Resource document – Literature Review and Parents' Focus groups*".

The second part of the morning was dedicated to sharing the experiences of the World Autism Day-WAD whose international day was celebrated on the 2nd of April. Each partner organization presented the activities carried out at local and national level. All organizations were very active in raising awareness about autism and several initiatives took place, both promoted by IPAT partners and local/national institutions. Interesting initiatives and events, also at policy level, were promoted in each country and some activities will take place in the following weeks. The session was the opportunity to make common reflections and plan a strategy for supporting such relevant and international days through the IPAT project. Testimonials of the experiences coming from the World Autism Day will be available on the IPAT website.

On the second day of the IPAT second transnational online meeting, partners organizations under the guidance of the Child and Adolescent Center really started to get to the heart of the IPAT project. The findings emerging from the research were translated into the skeleton of the IPAT module: seven basic topics plus an extra one were identified. Namely, partners agreed that the following will be addressed: 1. What is autism; 2. Therapeutic approach; 3. Legal and ethical issues and rights; 4. Lived experience of the family; 5. Parent's interaction with the child; 6. Social inclusion and autonomy; 7. Sexuality and 8. Management of behaviors of concern.

The 7+1 topics will be considered as age-, developmental stage- and functionality-specific. The module will be developed using an understandable language. In addition, experiential learning and active interaction among parents during the training will be encouraged.

The second part of day 2 of the online meeting was devoted to the Steering Committee and the internal management of the IPAT project covering the procedures, the risk assessment and management plan, the communication plan and finally the planning of the activities for the following months. Partners are ready to develop the content of the IPAT module in preparation for the delivery of the training for parents which will start at the beginning of 2022.

The IPAT second transnational online meeting was concluded by the second part of the virtual visit offered by the Gaziantep University that plunged project partners into Gaziantep's atmosphere and cultural treasures.

Coordinator:



Partners:



Associated Partners:

